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# Leaves of Healing

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## 90th Anniversary OF THE FOUNDING OF THE CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

### *Peace To Thee!*

*The Opening Message of Convocation '86*

By General Overseer Roger W. Ottersen  
Sunday, September 28, 1986

Peace to Thee!

We live in a world of unrest and uncertainty — a world that is filled with prejudice, greed, anxiety, frustration, disharmony and confusion. But in the Lord Jesus Christ and through the Christian faith we are offered peace.

Anyone who has been associated with Zion for any length of time, here or in foreign countries, knows the unique salutation which is ours — “Peace to thee”, and the response, “Peace to thee be Multiplied”. Of course, this salutation is more than just a greeting. It is both an expression of a desire for God’s blessing on the individual or group as well as an exhortation to experience His blessing. For this reason, I chose to use Zion’s special salutation as the Watchword for 1986 — our 90th anniversary. I also felt led of God to use this theme for Convocation.

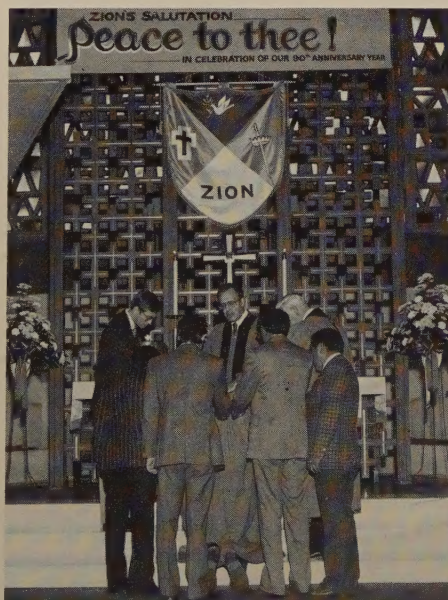
Throughout the year, in our periodical, “Leaves of Healing,” we have been remembering our past through special biographical articles of our past and present leadership and commemorative messages they have given. This historic information has now

been made into a new 70 page “Peace To Thee” booklet and is available for an offering of \$2.00 or more. My brothers and sisters in Christ, the world

around us is longing for peace. It always has. We are told that only 8% of the time since the beginning of recorded history has the world been entirely at peace. During this time, over 8,000 treaties have been broken. Jesus said, “In the world you are going to have tribulation, but be of good courage, I have overcome the world.” As believers, we can experience peace through the presence and power of the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we are looking for peace in the world, we are not going to find it. If we are looking for peace within ourselves, we are not going to find it. Where does peace come from? It certainly doesn’t come from a resolution of the United Nations. Peace is not something that can be transferred by some legal document. Throughout the Bible, over and over again, God extends and offers His peace to those who will put their trust in Him. Without God, my friends, there can be no peace.

In Mark, chapter four, after Jesus had spent the day speaking to the multitudes, mostly in parables, he requested that He and the disciples get in the boat and go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Enroute, Jesus fell asleep, weary from the day’s ministry. When they encountered a terrible storm, the disciples at first let Him sleep, trying their best to make it to shore. When it looked like they would surely drown, they anxiously awakened Jesus, saying,



Prayer of Dedication for General Overseer Roger W. Ottersen, beginning his third five year term. Left to right: Dean Matteson, Pat Hermosilla, James Petreman, Lay Representative, James Harichand, Jerry Sloan and Hugh Mainord.

*"Master, carest thou not that we perish?" "And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, 'Peace' be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."*

As Jesus calmed the storm in which He and the disciples found themselves, so He can calm the storms in our lives and give us peace. Even in the violence of stormy circumstances, we can have peace, for He is in control. Knowing that God is in control, and that "He works all things for good," even in a world filled with anxiety, the believer can know peace.

Some of the greatest illustrations of this peace are found in post resurrection appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in John, chapter 20. Verses 1 through 18 tell of Mary's anguish. She had followed the Lord to the cross and had remained there until her beloved Lord had died. She watched as he was lovingly taken down from the cross and laid in a nearby tomb. Early on the morning following the Sabbath, she had gone to the tomb, but when she arrived, it was empty. Tears flowed as she stooped to look into the tomb. She saw two angels, who asked her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" Yet, in her grief, she never considered them to be angels or that they were bearers of good news.

Turning back, she saw the Lord, but did not recognize Him. Not until He called her name did she recognize Him. Then her joy knew no bounds. She knew the voice of her Shepherd, and He had called her by her name. Her heart knew peace. Joyfully, she ran to tell the others that she had seen the Lord.

We are living in a highly technical age. Sometimes in our "computer age" we sometimes get the feeling that we are more a "number" than a person. We are identified by numbers—numbers that are recognized by computers. We have a Social Security number, a Driver's License number, credit card numbers, and many times when we shop in a store, we are served by numbers. How good it is to know that God doesn't look upon us as a number. God sees us and knows us by name. The Shepherd knows His sheep and calls them by name and they follow Him because they know the voice of the Shepherd.

Beginning in verse 19, we move from Mary and see the disciples collectively. We read:

*"When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where*

*the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' "*

His presence brought peace to their hearts even as His presence brings peace to our own hearts today.

One thing that I appreciate about the Christian faith is that even in times of difficulties and heartaches we can experience His peace. That is what Paul referred to in Philippians 4:7 —

*"And the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."*

Also in verse 9, we read:

*"The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you."*

God promises peace. We can experience peace with God when we confess our sin and invite Jesus Christ to be our Lord and Savior. Once we have done this, we can experience the peace of God as we face the tragedies and trials and difficulties of life.

Eight days after Jesus initially appeared to the disciples, Jesus appeared to them again, Thomas this time being present with them. Again, He greeted them with the salutation, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing." Thomas, who had doubted the report by the others that Jesus was alive, doubted no more, but committed himself afresh to Jesus Christ as Lord and God.

We do not know why Thomas missed that first great meeting with the Lord on the evening of the resurrection. Perhaps he was grieving alone. Whatever the case, he was present the following week and saw the Lord. We are living in a day when more and more emphasis is given to fun and pleasure, sports and shopping on the Lord's Day. They do not take seriously the responsibilities and opportunities for meeting with God. Staying away from worship leads to drifting from God, and that in turn leads to doubt. We cannot experience the peace of God away from His presence. Christ calls us to fellowship with Himself and fellowship leads to the experience of His peace.

It is so easy to get involved in Christian work and activities that we miss out in the fellowship that God wants us to enjoy with Him. May I ask as Convoca-

tion begins, "What is your need?" Is your need, like that of Mary, for your love to be renewed? Is your need, like that of the other disciples, to have your hope restored? Or like Thomas, is your faith wavering and you need reassurance of His loving concern? All of this is possible through Christ. We need to bring to Him our lack of love and loss of hope. We need to bring Him our wavering faith and pray that He might instill in our hearts a renewed faith, a renewed hope and renewed love for His work and people.

Let us pray:

*Our Father, we would ask your special blessing upon those who perhaps this day need to experience peace with God. Living in a world of frustration and doubts, prejudice and hatred, and where everyone seems to be looking out for himself, it is so easy to lose the assurance of Your presence and peace. Father, we pray that you will increase our faith. We pray that Your peace might be given to all who seek for it through Your Son, Jesus Christ, and we are thankful that He is with us here in worship today. We worship You and trust You for Your blessing throughout Convocation '86. This we ask through the blessed name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

(Pastor Ottersen then made a call for all who would like to renew their commitment to the Lord and the church to come forward and repeat with the prayer of consecration. Most of the congregation then came forward, or stood at their seats when the chancel steps were filled and repeated together the following Prayer of Consecration:)

*"Our heavenly Father, thank You for Your peace. Grant me the grace to live in peace with others that Your message of redemption will be proclaimed in power that many others may come to find peace with You. Take me as I am and make me what I ought to be in spirit, soul and body. Make me an instrument of Your peace to the world around me. I commit myself to the doing of Your will. Help me to be faithful to You and to Your church. This I pray in Jesus' Name. Amen"*

*"Now unto Him who loves us, and has washed us from our sins in His own precious blood, and has made us to be a kingdom of priests unto His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion, majesty and power, both now and forever. Amen"*

## Report by Randolph Capp of Their Work in Cairo, Egypt

The work that we are doing in Cairo is divided into three areas. The first area is with the Dal El-Thakafa Christian publishing house, and the second area is working with other Christian organizations and Christian missions who are involved in Arabic Christian literature. The third is a platform chalk talk drawing evangelistic ministry.

The first is with Dal El-Thakafa, which is one of the sectors in a large organization which is called the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Service. This is a completely Egyptian organization under the leadership of Dr. Samuel Habib. He is my director and I am also under another director working under him. There are about 300 workers in this organization, all of whom are Egyptian except for three foreigners.

The work in the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services has given me exposure to people in Egypt that we have never had exposure to before, particularly to people in the villages and rural areas where foreigners very rarely go. I remember going to a village one time and seeing the young children staring at me, and I asked the staff worker I was with why they were looking at me like this, and he said, I think it is because you are the first foreigner they have ever seen.

The CEOSS does many, many different things, most of which is development work in rural Egypt. For example, they constructed a large and modern training facility right in the heart of an Egyptian village. This serves as a training facility for village leaders and other vocational training programs that CEOSS is doing. They are involved in teaching village women how to raise their children—how to give babies a bath and how to feed and care for them. They are also involved in different vocational training programs, helping people learn skills by which they can earn a living.

In the rural parts of Egypt, there is poverty almost beyond description. Through vocational training programs, here people are able to learn skills by which they can get gainful employment. Also, CEOSS has just begun working in the most poverty stricken areas—that of the villages of the garbage collectors of Cairo. These people go out on their monkey carts, collect garbage, take it back and dump it in front of their ram-

shackle dwellings to sort it for anything that can be recycled and sold.

I wish you could be with me when we go down to a village where we have just finished working. People in the village will throw a big party—there were 2,000 at the party I attended—to express their thankfulness for CEOSS's work within the village. One by one they expressed their gratitude for some aspect of the ministry of CEOSS to them. This included testimonies of medical and dental care, vocational training, or learning how to read for the first time. One young paraplegic told of receiving a wheelchair and training to set himself up in a small business.

One section of the CEOSS is the Dal El-Thakafa publishing house. It is in this publishing house I work. We publish books and monthly magazines, targeted to various groups and interests. The books range from theological books for pastors to children's books.

Also, we work with other Christian organizations to help in their Christian literature projects. Most of this work has been for the Arabic Living Bible program. The coordinator for this program and his wife are very close friends of Nancy and myself. This project is reaching people throughout Egypt. The Living Bibles are sold out on the street and since it came out, about 50,000 Living New Testaments have been sold, mostly to Muslims.

Part of our work, which has taken an increasingly amount of time since we were home last, has been the platform chalk talk drawings. A drawing usually begins at home, preparing the sky and the blacklight picture for the meeting which would usually come the next day. When a meeting begins, an Egyptian pastor or evangelist will begin by telling the Gospel and relating his sermon to the picture that will be drawn.

Arabic music will accompany the drawing of the picture and scripture will be read from the Arabic Bible. It takes about 20 minutes to draw the picture. When the picture is completed, suddenly the scene changes which leads to the invitation by the pastor to receive Christ as Savior. Since the last time we were home, the total attendance at chalk talk meetings has been about 10,000 people.

Egypt is a very needy country. It is locked in Islam. We have both the opportunity and responsibility to give the gospel through literature, chalk talk drawings and in other ways. Thank you for your prayer support in the past and we ask that you continue that support as we return.

## Testimony of Nancy Capp

We are really thankful for the love and prayer support we feel. We also thank God for the protection He gives daily, which is in part due to your prayers. Two areas we especially appreciate protection are (1) On the roads of Cairo—which you almost have to experience to believe, and (2) in our daily food. The kind of sanitation we have makes eating a high risk area. Then, the potential for unrest in that area makes us mindful of God's daily protecting care.

We are also thankful for Stephanie's safe arrival and for her cheerful outlook on life. She is just a positive little person.

I would also like to share a few specific prayer requests for our family.

- The demands on Randy's time and energy make it difficult to have any consistent quality times with the family. We ask you to pray for wisdom and guidance in this matter.

- I am especially in need of prayer as I feel Satan has been attacking me in the area of my emotions.

- Pray also for Christopher, that he may have a godly teacher and may have a few Christian friends. He is the only blond among hundreds of students in the school, which has given me a new appreciation for minorities. We want him to relate to others well in the school but not to do the things they do.

—Thank you.

## Salt or Sponges

*An important message to us all from Judges, chapter 6, delivered by Randolph Capp on Monday evening of Convocation '86.*



Randolph and Nancy Capp, Missionaries serving in Cairo, Egypt.

If I hear it one time in Cairo, I hear it a thousand times. It's the greeting, "Issalaam Alaykum," and the response is "Wa Alaykum Issalaam". This the standard Muslim greeting to one another and means, "Peace to thee". However, the Muslims have no objective basis for that greeting. They only have hope that when they stand before God in judgment, God will be merciful to them. But when we say, "Peace to thee", we have an objective basis for saying that—the blood of Jesus Christ, which has reconciled us to God.

Let us read Judges 6:1-10 (From the New International Version):

*Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites. Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds. Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country. They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels; they invaded the land to ravage it. Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried to the Lord for help.*

*When the Israelites cried to the Lord because of Midian, he sent them a prophet, who said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'I brought you up out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. I snatched you from the power of Egypt and from the hand of all your oppressors. I drove them from before you and gave you their land. I said to you, "I am the Lord your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live." But you have not listened to me.'*

*Let us pray before we go on: "Father, we commit this time to you. I know you have led me to this scripture and I know it may not be for everyone, but it is for someone, as it has been for me personally. I pray for your Holy Spirit's teachings and revelation, showing us not only of yourself, but ourselves, and that your Holy Spirit will challenge us to a deeper commitment to you. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

Let me continue on in chapter six by

way of summary in a sort of paraphrase version.

*It was the best place Gideon could find. The Midianites would never think of this old wine press, he thought. And there he could thresh out a few stalks of wheat to feed his family. How different it was from all the stories he had heard. In days gone by, God had delivered His people from Egypt, provided for them in the wilderness, parted the Jordan River, and brought down the walls of Jericho. But these things no longer happened. It seemed that God no longer worked that way.*

*"The Lord is with you, mighty warrior!"*

*Gideon quickly spun around, astonished to find that he hadn't heard the stranger approach, and even more astonished that the stranger seemed to know what he had been thinking. Gideon's thoughts became verbalized. "How can the Lord be with us? Where are all the wonders our fathers told us about? Why are we being oppressed by Midian?"*

*The stranger leaned forward. "Gideon, I am sending you to deliver your people from their hand."*

*Huh, who is sending me, Gideon thought. He studied the figure seated before him. Either this man is a crazy man, or...Gideon paused. He'd heard about the Angel of the Lord. "I..I..I can't," exclaimed Gideon. "I'm a nobody around here."*

*"Yes you can," the stranger replied. "I will be with you, and you will defeat them."*

*Now the stranger's claim was made. He had begun by saying, "The Lord will be with you." Now he was saying, "I will be with you." Gideon's heart was pounding. The figure before him was claiming deity, but he needed proof. "Let me bring you an offering, and please give me a sign that it is really you."*

*The stranger settled back. "I'll wait until you return," he said.*

*Gideon quickly prepared meat, broth and bread and set them on a rock before the visitor. Without another word, the stranger touched the meat with his staff. Fire suddenly flared up from the rock and consumed the offering that Gideon had placed before him. And just as suddenly, the stranger vanished from his sight.*

*Gideon screamed. This holy God had visited a sinful man face to face. Only one thought filled his mind now. He would die. But somehow, though the figure was no longer before him, he heard a voice: "Peace! Don't be afraid. You're not going to die." Now Gideon was filled with a holy reverence and awe for God. He could no longer think about threshing wheat. No, now it was time to worship. He built an altar and called it, "The Lord is peace."*

That concludes Judges 6:1-24.

The relationship between God and Gideon was a relationship of peace. God spoke words of peace to Gideon. But the whole context of their conversation was to make plans for war. Words of peace—plans for war. It is exactly the same in the Christian life. We are called into a relationship of peace with God. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." But from this relationship of peace with God, we are sent out into the world to do spiritual warfare.

Jesus has called us to be the salt of the earth—to be a preserving agent against the spread of corruption in the world. There is tremendous growth in Christianity in this country. George Gallup says there are some 50 million born again Christians here. You can dial in a Christian radio or television program almost anywhere you go. Christian literature is more available than ever before. Christian music has reached a sophistication that rivals or surpasses anything in the secular market. Christians are a major political force. They have played a primary role in the last three presidential elections. But why is it that wickedness is on the increase in this country?

Why is it that despite the growth of Christianity, more children are still being aborted than born. Why is it that drugs are proliferating and spreading to more and more age groups and younger and younger ages. Why is it that teenage pregnancies and divorces are on the increase? Why is it that this growth of Christianity in our country has had relatively little impact upon the general society? Why is it that we as God's people, are seemingly ineffective in combating and stemming this rising tide. I believe there are insights in the story of Gideon that will help us see the reasons.

The Israelites were in a desperate situation. The Bible says that the Midianites and other nomadic tribes "camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza, and did not

spare a living thing for Israel. They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels. They invaded the land to ravage it."

My question is, "Why did the Israelites find themselves in such a situation in the first place?" Simply this: They, like sponges, had absorbed and soaked up the lifestyle of the world around them. This is what God told them in verse ten:

*"I said to you, 'I am the Lord your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not listened to me."*

Oh, yes, these people had devotion to Jehovah. Just look at Gideon's own father, Joash. The meaning of his name is "Jehovah's strength." His name honored the Lord, but at the same time, Joash had an altar to Baal in his back yard, the very thing God had said, "Do not do". And as hard as this might seem, it appears that much of what we call a Christian resurgence in this country, is largely a surface thing, and has not penetrated deeply into inner life-changing convictions.

This is not just opinion. This is confirmed by recent Gallup polls which show that though some 40% of Americans attend church on any given Sunday, there is "little difference between those who go to church and those who don't". This is also confirmed by studies done by the Christian broadcasting network and the secular television stations. They show that the TV viewing habits of Christians are not different than non-Christians. The fact is that many of us are more like sponges than like salt. We soak up the lifestyles and the values of the society around us rather than being a pervading influence and agent against the spread of corruption.

Now someone may say, "Wait a minute. I don't live like the world. I don't drink; I don't smoke; I don't gamble; I don't eat certain foods; I don't dance; I don't listen to rock music; I don't do this; I do such and such, and I don't do the other, etc". We all tend to do this, and this betrays our problem, because we tend to define worldliness by a list of taboos—a list of don'ts, and if we don't do the things on our list, we're not worldly. But worldliness just cannot be defined by a list. Rather, worldliness is characterized by three general areas.

First John 2:15 and 16 tell us that worldliness is characterized by "the lust

of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life." Shortly stated, the priorities of lust and pride. These priorities, lust and pride, are the foundation on which whole world system is built, and they permeate every sector of our society.

Incoming freshmen to Harvard University, one of the leading institutions of higher education in our country, unwittingly admit the priorities of lust and pride on their application forms.

I was fascinated to read in one of the weekly news magazines a quote from the president of Harvard University, Mr. Derrick Bock. The stated goals of incoming freshmen were: "money first, followed by power, then in making a reputation." "Money first," my friends, is lust. Followed by "power"—that is lust. "Making a reputation"—that is pride.

Lust and pride were the foundations of the very first sin ever committed in the universe. When a beautiful angel, according to Isaiah 14, said, "*I will ascend to heaven, I will raise my throne above the stars of God.*" That is lust and pride. Lust for power—the pride of his position over God. It is interesting to know that this angel who was called Lucifer, who is also called Satan, is described in the Bible as the "*prince of this world*". Lust and pride.

What is pride? Pride is the attitude which says, either consciously or subconsciously, such things as this: "I don't need God. I can make it on my own. I want to make a name for myself. Look at what I've done. Look at what I've got." Pride gives self the ultimate credit and glory, not God. The NIV describes it as the boasting of what we have and do. How different that is from the attitude of the Apostle Paul, who said: "*May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified unto me and I unto the world.*" Most of us don't readily associate pride with worldliness, probably because we all struggle with it in our hearts and we don't want to think of ourselves as worldly.

As for lust, it goes far beyond the sexual realm. For lust is simply a desire to "pursue to the point of idolatry". It can be an uncontrolled desire in practically anything. Sexual pleasure, of course, but also recreation, material possessions, personal power and authority—food, clothing, travel, and the list could go on and on. Many things are all right and wonderful in themselves. They are given to us by God for our enjoyment.

That is what 2 Timothy 6:17 says:

*"Command those that are rich in this present world not to be arrogant or to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who provides us with everything for our enjoyment."*

Many things are all right in themselves, but when the desire for them and their relative importance in our lives becomes blown out of proportion—when they cease to be blessings from God, things that cause us to give thanks and praise to God—when they cease to be that, and become important for their own sake, that is lust? Do you see? I can even be in the Christian ministry and be worldly through pride. I could stand up here and tell you of the ministry God has given me, but if the attitude in my heart be pride, it is worldliness.

Someone can be proud in his heart that he doesn't play golf on Sundays, and he can sit in the pew and be just as worldly as the one whose priority is golf on a Sunday morning. A Christian with an uncontrolled desire for possessions, whatever they might be, is just as worldly as someone who never goes to church. Worldliness is not defined by a list. Rather, it resides in the area of the heart—in our desires and our attitudes—based on pride and uncontrolled desire. The bottom line is that worldliness means to live like the world, and the question you and I must continually ask ourselves, is this: "Does my lifestyle, my priorities, or my interests coincide with the lifestyle, priorities, and interests of the lost world? Do they run alongside? Does my life center around the things of this life, this world? Or does my life center around the things of the life to come?"

Am I like a sponge, soaking up the values of the world around me, or am I like salt. We have got to get rid of our little lists and expand the definition of what worldliness is in accordance to what the Bible says, and when we do, most of us will have to admit that worldliness has a far stronger stranglehold on us than we ever realized.

Where does the absorbing of the lifestyle around us lead? Let us see where it led in Gideon's day. Judges 6:2 says:

*"Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds."*

The people of God who have adopted the values of the world around them can respond in one of two ways when op-

position comes. They can respond in repentance and then resistance against that evil or they can retreat. The Israelites should have chosen to repent. Instead, they chose to retreat into clefts, caves and strongholds.

Those who have visited Israel, are probably aware of the word for stronghold because it is the same word for a famous Israeli landmark—a tourist site—a fortress that bears the name, “Masada.” And rising some 1,400 feet above the western shore of the Dead Sea, this high mountain and fortress rises up and looks virtually impregnable by land—so much so that in 70 A.D., a small group of Jewish zealots went out there during the destruction of Jerusalem, and held out for three years against the invading Roman legions.

You see, a Masada, like that famous landmark, provides protection, but do you know what else? It also enforces isolation. In their strongholds, the Israelites had protection, but they were in self-imposed isolation. They were safe in those little corners where they had fled, but down in the plush valleys where they had lived before, wickedness reigned.

It is to our shame that we evangelical Christians have often done the very same thing as those Israelites. We have tended to isolate ourselves, and with very few exceptions, have not openly confronted the scores of false concepts, philosophies and value systems that have taken over the society around us.

The late Dr. Francis Schaeffer was one of the greatest Christian thinkers of our time, and I recommend to you his book, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, which I believe was his last book before passing on to his heavenly reward. (I hope we have it in our library.) In his preface, Dr. Schaeffer wrote this: “*The statements I am making in the pages of this book are perhaps the most important statements I have ever written.*” And in the book, he says this: “*It is my firm belief,*” and I am simplifying his words for clarity sake, “*that when we stand before Jesus Christ, we will find that it has been the weakness and accommodation of evangelicals on the issues of the day that has been largely responsible for the loss of Christian values and beliefs that have taken place in our own country over the last 40 to 60 years.*”

Listen: the battle for the hearts and minds of men and women does not primarily take place within these walls. Yes, we come here for intercessory prayer for the lost, but we must go out

from here and proclaim the message of the gospel in the places where we live, work, shop and rub shoulders with the lost world. The church building was never intended to be a place primarily for evangelism. People might come here and get saved. Hallelujah! But the church building is primarily a place where we come together for worship, fellowship and to get strengthened in the word of God. Then we go out from here and we evangelize the lost world where they are. Too often you and I have opted out of the battle. We have tended to make our church facility—sorry to say—our little cave, our little stronghold, and to isolate ourselves, while down in the valley—out there—wickedness reigns.

I remember working at the Waukegan News-Sun and reading of Charles Coulson’s conversion to Christ over the wire services, following the Watergate scandal that rocked our nation. I sneered along with most others who read it over the wire services, thinking, “what some people will do to get a lighter rap.” I didn’t know that some time later I would give my life to Christ, and that Charles Coulson would go on to write books that would deeply affect me inside. One such is the book, *Who Speaks for God?* In it he wrote: “*We must take the church to the people. Too often we sit in churches as spectators, waiting for the needy multitudes to come and watch the show with us. Our challenge is for us to get out of our cozy pews and take the gospel to those outside.*”

Jesus didn’t set up counseling hours in the temple. He went into the houses of the most notorious sinners—to the places where the lame, the beggars and the needy could be found.

Think of the commands given to the early church. Jesus told his disciples to “*Go into all the world.*” In Matthew 16:16-18, Jesus said that His church would be built on the confession that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and that the gates of hell would not stand against that confession. Do you get the imagery in that verse? The church is the invading force, and the gates of hell will not stand against it. The church is on the offensive.

What was the attitude of the early church to oppression and opposition? Acts 4:29 records their prayer: “*Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.*” Again, the church—on the offensive.

Christianity is intellectually defensible and credible. Ample evidence for the

resurrection of Jesus Christ, which validates all that He said and did, is available for the open heart. There is ample evidence for the inerrancy of the scriptures—that the Bible is the Word of God without error. The Bible says this of itself. Jesus taught this. The early church has always held to it. The origins of the Bible—the way it came together—plainly declared divine authorship.

The need of the hour is for an army of men and women who can take these truths out into the streets—here in Zion, and the surrounding areas and live and proclaim them to the people they rub shoulders with.

Let us just be flat out honest with ourselves. Are we salt? Are we living as preserving agents against the spread of corruption? Or are we sponges, absorbing the values of the world system around us? Are we huddled in caves while wickedness has free reign outside, or are we advancing in spiritual conquest—boldly living and proclaiming the truths of God.

One of the most moving statements in Judges 6 is the reply of the Angel of the Lord to Gideon’s request to bring him meat, bread and broth. Remember, this Angel of the Lord was a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ. The Bible says that through Him all things were made and without Him nothing has been made that was made. The Bible also says that He is the radiance of God’s glory, the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word. He who upholds all things by His power, said to Gideon, “I’ll wait until you return.”

Perhaps for some of us tonight, He is still saying, “I will wait till you return.” Sponges or salt, caves or conquests? God has spoken to us words of peace, but He has given us plans for war.

Let us pray:

“*Father in heaven, I pray in Jesus’ name, that we will increasingly be a fellowship which is victoriously going out in conquest, effecting dynamically, our town, our county, our state and through the outreach of our church, our nation and our world. But we know, Father, that it all begins with our individual lives and our walk with you. And I pray that the Holy Spirit will search deeply our hearts and show us the places where we have grieved, or are grieving Him and lead us to the way everlasting. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.*”

## Report of Convocation '86

Once again, our Annual Convocation was greatly blessed of God. Attendance was good and the messages and testimonies were, for the most part, outstanding. I believe God has done a good work in the hearts of many. I am also sure that the prayers of God's people around the world, that have been concentrated on Convocation, have had much to do with the blessing received.

Delegates included Pat and Ester Hermosilla (Philippines), Sam and Esther Harrichand (Canada), James Harichand (Guyana), Thelma Green (Jamaica), Jerry and Dolly Sloan and two of Roy Tate's daughters (Navajo), Randy and Nancy Capp (Egypt), Dean and Audrey Matteson and Dean and Susie LaBelle (Michigan City, Indiana), and Steve Miller (Aurora, Illinois), plus many friends.

Prior to Convocation we had flood rains which did considerable damage in our area and the mid-west. Many in Zion suffered from flooded basements. Most of the week of Convocation was cloudy with frequent rains, but it didn't hinder the blessing of God on the meetings.

On Friday evening, General Overseer Roger Ottersen became very ill and had to leave the service. It was discovered that he had a bladder and colon infection. He was not able to attend the Saturday Business Meeting or the Sunday morning Bible School and Consecration of Children Service, but was able to be out for the closing climactic Service, though not to give the message.

At the Annual Session of the Christian Catholic Church, which was held on Saturday evening of October 4, 1986, seven amendments to the Constitution of the C.C.C. were voted upon. Six of the proposed amendments were accepted and one, having to do with the earlier retirement age of ministers, failed. Details of the amendments will be published in the next issue of Leaves of Healing.

Following the message at the closing and Major Worship Service of Convocation, Overseer Minton declared to the congregation that the General Council had, by the required three-fourths majority, selected Rev. Roger W. Ottersen to serve for the next five year term. They then called upon the congregation to confirm that selection by a standing vote. It appeared that all stood. Overseer Minton then called for all the elders present to come and lay hands on



Opening of Convocation with the Ceremony of the flags, representing the nations in which we have work or support missionaries.



Baptismal candidates: Left to right: Pam Luther, Tom Lex Jr., Sharon Wilson, Stacey Wright, David Lasaitis, Tara Amerighi and Pastor Earl Minton.

Overseer Ottersen for the prayer of dedication, commending him to the Lord for the great responsibility placed upon him. Prayer was also offered for his healing.

The Sacrificial Offering again set a record of just under \$50,000. Actually, with that which came through the mail, it amounted to just over \$50,000. We praise the Lord for this as the calls for help are so many.

Overseer Ottersen was to have left on Monday morning for ministry in South Africa, but early that morning he came down with severe pain from the infection, necessitating him to be away from the office for the next four weeks of healing and recuperation. We thank God that he is now fully restored to health. However, he has been warned to keep a lighter schedule than what he had been used to.

Presently, our largest and fastest growing work is in the Philippines, which now numbers 60 congregations in the three islands of Luzon, Leyte and Mindanao. Elder Pat Hermosilla has expressed that the most urgent need is to reopen the high school at Viseras in Leyte, where our work first began in the Philippines with an orphanage following World War II. Three of the government high schools in the area have closed and there is a desperate need for our Zion Academy to reopen. We also have teachers from our own churches willing to teach and to encourage choice young men to consider the ministry of the gospel in the Christian Catholic Church.

The facilities would also be used during vacation times as a camp for ministry to our youth, and for spiritual life conferences for our members and church leaders. Let us make this an earnest prayer request for guidance and the supply of needed funds.

So much more could have been said about the blessings of Convocation '86—of the testimonies and of the sharing by delegates. We regret that many of the sessions were not recorded—such as the Wednesday noon service when Iris Mintern, Ester Hermosilla and Nancy Capp shared from their heart of God's working in their lives. We do want to express, however, our deep gratitude for all who prayed, for this, I believe, was what has made our Convocations so special. God has been present and has blessed His people.

—Earl Minton



Iris Mintern, wife of the late Michael J. Mintern, now living in Vancouver, B.C.



Rev. and Mrs. Pat Hermosilla, Philippines.

*"I was just passing by on my way  
to the store,  
I really meant to have  
called before."*

*"Oh, do come in and sit awhile!"  
"Yes," she answers with a  
friendly smile.*

*"Perhaps a warm drink  
and a little chat?  
Won't you sit down?  
I'll take your hat."*

*I set the tray with special care,  
Then tidy my apron  
and smooth my hair.*

*"What you've done to this house  
is such a delight.  
And the flowers in your garden  
are a lovely sight!"*

*She sips her drink and smiles at me,  
As warm and friendly  
as she can be.*

*We talk for awhile,  
then she has to leave.  
I feel the urge to  
tug at her sleeve.*

*"Perhaps you could stay  
a wee bit more?"  
But smiling, she makes her  
way to the door.*

*"Thank you for coming,  
now do take care!"  
Then I set the tray down  
by the empty chair.*

*I watch from my window  
and hear myself say,  
"Perhaps that will really  
happen today!"*

*"Pure religion and undefiled  
before God and the Father is this: to  
visit the fatherless and the widows in  
their affliction, and to keep oneself  
unspotted from the world."*

—James 1:27

Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

—Matthew 25:40

<sup>1</sup>Credit: James C. Dobson, Ph.D., President, Focus on the Family (a non-profit radio, television and literature ministry).

\*Our great-grandfathers called it the holy Sabbath; our grandfathers, the Sabbath; our fathers, Sunday; but today, we call it the week-end.

—Wesleyan Methodist

\*God never intended his church to be a refrigerator in which to preserve perishable piety. He intended it to be an incubator in which to hatch converts.

—F. Lincicome

## News from Zion Gospel Chapel

Michigan City, Indiana — On June 29, 1986, the Church had a Mortgage Burning Celebration following the final payment of the mortgage on their church facilities. Congratulations in being relieved of this monthly burden.



The deacons participating with Pastor Dean Matteson (far right) are: Francis Cox, Ed Peek and Bill Sherwood, Chairman.

## On Being A Friend

Taking time to be a friend is becoming a lost art in the lives of all too many of us. We become so busy in our own affairs that we don't even develop or maintain friendship with our spouse in marriage, let alone with others who may need our friendship.

Elderly people—and there are more of them today than ever before—are often especially in need of a friend. Many live alone and are unable to get out as before. They yearn for a telephone call or visit from a "friend".

The following poem, entitled "Waiting", speaks of this. It was written by Theresa V. Meyer, and appeared in the July Focus on the Family newsletter, and is used with permission.

*I watch from my window  
day after day,  
For someone may come to my  
door and say,*